

Amendments to the Claims

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Claims 1-162 (cancelled):

Claim 163. (previously presented): Combinatorial chemistry reactor apparatus for the parallel processing of reaction mixtures under pressure, comprising

vessels for containing said reaction mixtures under pressure, and

an injection system for introducing fluid into the vessels at pressures different from ambient pressure, said injection system comprising:

a movable fluid delivery probe;

fill ports for receiving the probe, said probe being movable from one fill port to another to deliver fluid;

conduits connecting the fill ports and respective vessels;

valves for opening and closing said conduits, each valve being operable to open to permit the delivery of fluid from the probe to a respective vessel at a pressure different from ambient pressure, and to close before the probe is withdrawn from a respective fill port; and

seals for maintaining the reaction mixtures under pressure when the valves are open during delivery of fluid from the probe.

Claim 164. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 wherein each fill port is configured for the insertion of said probe therein, said seals comprising a seal in each fill port for sealing engagement with the probe when the probe is inserted in the fill port.

Claim 165. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 164 wherein said valves are located in said conduits downstream from respective fill ports.

Claim 166. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 wherein said valve comprises a poppet movable by pressure away from a valve seat to open said conduit, and a spring for biasing the poppet toward said seat to close the conduit.

Claim 167. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 further comprising a reactor block having a series of wells therein extending down from an upper surface of the block, liners removably received in said wells forming said vessels, and a manifold mounting the fill ports generally adjacent the upper surface of the reactor block, said conduits comprising passages in the manifold in fluid communication with said fill ports for flow of fluid from the probe to said vessels.

Claim 168. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 167 wherein each fill port comprises a body attached to said manifold, and a bore through the body in fluid communication with a respective passage in said manifold, said seals comprising a seal in said bore adapted for sealing engagement with the probe when the probe is inserted in said bore.

Claim 169. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 further comprising a robot system for moving the probe between said fill ports.

Claim 170. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 169 wherein each vessel has a volume in the range of 1-100 ml.

Claim 171. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 wherein said fluid is in liquid form.

Claims 172-177 (cancelled)

Claim 178. (previously presented): Apparatus for the parallel processing of reaction mixtures, comprising

a reactor block having a series of wells therein extending down from an exterior surface of the block,

a removable plate removably secured to said reactor block and facing said exterior surface thereof, said removable plate having openings therein in registry with the wells in the reactor block,

removable liners in the wells for containing said reaction mixtures under pressure,

an injection system for introducing fluid into the vessels at pressures different from ambient pressure, said injection system comprising:

a movable fluid delivery probe;

fill ports for receiving the probe, said probe being movable from one fill port to another to deliver fluid;

conduits connecting the fill ports and respective wells;

valves for opening and closing said conduits, each valve being operable to open to permit the delivery of fluid from the probe to a respective well at a pressure different from ambient pressure, and to close after said delivery;

stirring mechanisms attached to said removable plate and removable with the plate for stirring said reaction mixtures, said stirring mechanisms extending through the openings in the removable plate and into respective wells, and

seals for sealing against leakage through said removable plate openings when the removable plate is secured to the reactor block.

Claim 179. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 178 further comprising an injector manifold mounted on said reactor block having a plurality of fill port seats in fluid communication with said conduits, said fill port seats being engageable by said fill ports.

Claim 180. (previously presented): A method of conducting a catalytic reaction in a plurality of pressurized vessels in a parallel reactor, said method comprising:

(1) loading each of said vessels with gaseous and liquid reactants;

(2) allowing said reactants to reach equilibrium with respect to the concentration of gaseous reactant in the liquid reactant at a pressure greater than about 10 psig;

(3) inserting a fluid delivery probe into one of a plurality of fill ports on the reactor communicating with a first vessel of said plurality of vessels,

(4) injecting a quantity of a catalytic fluid from said probe for delivery through an open valve to the first pressurized vessel while maintaining the reactants under pressure,

(5) effecting closure of the valve after injection of said catalytic fluid,

(6) withdrawing said probe from the fill port after closure of the valve, and

(7) repeating 3-6 for a second vessel of said plurality of vessels.

Claim 181. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 180 further comprising establishing a seal between the probe and the fill port before injecting said quantity of catalytic fluid, and maintaining said seal until after closure of said valve.

Claim 182. (currently amended): A method for parallel processing of reaction mixtures in a combinatorial chemistry reactor system comprising a plurality of vessels sealed against fluid communication with one another, said method comprising:

- (1) providing each of said vessels with one of said reaction mixtures,
- (2) pressurizing said vessels to a pressure ~~other than ambient pressure~~ greater than about 10 psig,
- (3) introducing a quantity of fluid from a fluid delivery probe into a first vessel of said plurality of vessels pressurized according to step (2),
- (4) repeating step (3) for a second vessel of said plurality of vessels pressurized according to step (2),

- (5) preventing leakage of fluid under pressure from each vessel during and after said introduction of fluid from said fluid delivery probe, and
- (6) allowing the reaction mixtures in the vessels to react.

Claim 183. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 wherein the reaction mixtures comprise fluid introduced from the probe.

Claim 184. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 wherein said combinatorial chemistry reactor system comprises an injection system comprising said fluid delivery probe, fill ports for receiving the probe, conduits connecting the fill ports and respective vessels of said plurality of vessels, and valves for opening and closing said conduits, said method comprising inserting said fluid delivery probe into one of the fill ports, injecting a quantity of fluid from the probe through the open valve into the pressurized vessel while maintaining the reaction mixture in the vessel under pressure, closing the valve after injection of said fluid to seal against leakage of fluid from the pressurized vessel and withdrawing said probe from the fill port.

Claim 185. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 184 further comprising establishing a seal between the probe and the fill port before injecting said quantity of fluid, and maintaining said seal until after closure of said valve.

Claim 186. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 185 wherein said seal between the probe and the fill port is established upon inserting the probe into the fill port and said seal is maintained during at least a portion of said withdrawal of the probe from the fill port.

Claim 187. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 186 wherein said probe is withdrawn from the fill port after closure of the valve.

Claim 188. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 wherein said quantity of fluid is in the range of 1-100 ml.

Claim 189 (cancelled)

Claim 190. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 wherein said probe is moved by a robot system under the control of a computer.

Claim 191. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 190 wherein said robot system is a 3-axis translation system for moving the probe.

Claim 192. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 further comprising loading each of said vessels with gaseous and liquid reactants and allowing said reactants to reach equilibrium with respect to the concentration of gaseous reactant in the liquid reactant at a pressure greater than about 10 psig, the fluid introduced from the probe into the pressurized vessels comprising a quantity of a catalytic fluid.

Claim 193. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 further comprising sensing the temperature of said reaction mixtures in said vessels.

Claim 194. (previously presented): A method as set forth in claim 182 further comprising sensing the pressure in said vessels.

Claim 195. (previously presented): Apparatus as set forth in claim 163 further comprising a reactor block having a series of wells therein extending down from an upper surface of the block, and liners removably received in said wells forming said vessels.

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